

10 December 2021

Director – Social and Infrastructure Assessments
Planning and Assessment,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Marist Catholic College North Shore
Application No.: SSD-10473

Response to Exhibition of Amended State Significant Development Application

We are residents of Carlow Street North Sydney and appreciate the opportunity afforded to us to comment on the above proposal. While we can see the benefits to the school of the upgraded facilities which the development will provide, we consider that the impact on residents in surrounding streets, has not been given due consideration in the design of the buildings, and in particular, the building facing Carlow Street.

Our concerns on the proposed development are set out below.

Building Mass and Scale

Carlow Street is the first real residential street going north from the cbd of North Sydney and serves to remind the community of North Sydney's history and heritage and therefore there is a strong need for its preservation to be respected and observed. The following matters indicate that the large scale of the proposed development does not acknowledge or affirm the heritage surroundings in which it will be situated.

1. Our reading of the Carlow Street Building Sections contained in the original concept plan for the site, is that it was proposed that the building on the corner of Miller and Carlow Streets would be 5 levels above ground floor at the Miller Street corner and then reduce to 2 levels above ground floor where the building was (approximately) opposite the residential area of Carlow Street (west of Tucker Street). This reduction in height was also confirmed (in our reading of the concept plan) by the Ridge Street Building Section which showed that the western end of the Carlow Street would not be visible above the rooftop of the St Mary's Primary School located on Ridge Street.

(Refer attached Annexure A – Pages 16 and 17 of North Shore Education Precinct| School Masterplan Report)

The current plans, indicate the entire Carlow Street Building will now be 4 levels above ground with a rooftop recreation space, resulting in an overall increase in the building mass. As currently proposed, the building's frontage to Carlow Street at its western end will be ~20m (natural ground level). This is significantly higher than any other building in the residential area of Carlow Street and the maximum building height of 12 metres outlined in the North Sydney Local Environment Plan 2013 (Clause 4.3).

It is requested that the building mass be returned to the design outlined in the original concept plan which would provide more alignment with the surrounding residential properties.

2. Currently all the properties with a frontage to Carlow Street are designated R2 Low Density Residential or R3 Medium Density Residential, with both the school and the North Sydney Hotel having a Miller Street frontage. The residential properties in Carlow Street are characterised by single, and two-storey, detached and semi-detached dwellings, and the proposed development reorients the school frontage to Carlow Street and in doing so, makes no concession to maintaining the residential appearance of the street. If approved, this development will result in the undue imposition of bulk and scale relative to surrounding existing low scale, one to two storey residential developments, and as viewed from the public domain. The proposed building typology, density and scale is incongruous with the low/medium density residential character of Carlow Street which it will now have as its frontage.

As the surrounding sites on Carlow Street will continue to be zoned for low/medium density residential development and subject to the development guidelines of the North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 and "Conservation Area Study for the Holtermann Estate Conservation Area 1998", any future development on the Marist College site should take cognizance of the surrounding area. The current structures on the site sit below the existing tree line however, the scale of the proposed development means it cannot be fully mitigated by the existing street trees or proposed landscaping and this is shown in the plans submitted.

3. In the Ethos Urban letter of 30 August 2021 addressing the visual Impact of the bulk and scale of the proposed buildings on the North Sydney Hotel (one of the heritage items surrounding the site) it is stated that *"... the proposal will only be of considerable visual impact from the eastern end of Carlow Street, which is considered to have an inconsistent character and less sensitive to the nature of change proposed than the central and western parts of the street."* (Page 9). This statement is correct in noting the "significant visual impact" that the proposed building will have is at the eastern end of the street. However, it is incorrect in its assertion that there is inconsistent character in this section of the street as there is a clear delineation between the commercial and residential areas of Carlow Street. The North Sydney Hotel frontage to Carlow Street ceases at Tucker Lane (to its west) after which, the

residential component of Carlow Street commences and continues until West Street, with all houses located on the northern side of Carlow Street having a consistent heritage frontage - not just those located in the central/western ends of the street as stated in the Ethos Urban letter. Therefore, the continuation of the proposed building height opposite the residential houses located at the eastern end of Carlow Street will result in significant visual and heritage impact to those properties.

The Ethos Urban letter on Page 9 further notes *"While of greater height and bulk to the North Sydney Hotel, as is shown in Figure 7 and Figure 8, this is not considered to constitute a visually unacceptable relationship. The height difference will be read as approximately 1.5 storeys. As shown in Figure 8, it is noted that a similar height already exists in the Miller Street streetscape nearby and to the north of the site. The length of the Carlow Street building to Miller Street is also not considered to be visually excessive when read together with the North Sydney Hotel."* If this same argument is used in respect of the western section of the Carlow Street Building which is opposite/adjacent to the residential houses, the following conclusions must be reached which highlights the inappropriateness of a building of this bulk and mass being continued into the residential zone of Carlow Street:

- (i) There is a visually unacceptable relationship
 - (ii) The height difference will be read as 3 storeys (including the rooftop recreation space)
 - (iii) There are no similar height buildings in the residential zone of Carlow Street. It is noted that all new developments on the adjacent/southern side of Carlow Street are zoned R# Medium Density and restricted to 2 storeys.
4. The lack of acknowledgment in the proposed design to the residential and heritage zone of Carlow Street is highlighted by the reduction in building setback as the building proceeds along Carlow Street. At the corner of Miller and Carlow Streets the setback is 6,300mm due to its substantial height but this is incrementally reduced to 4,400mm as the building progresses to its western end on Carlow Street – where it is opposite and adjacent to residential properties all of which have a significantly smaller footprint.

Traffic Management:

The Construction Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan report prepared by The Transport Planning Partnership (**TTPP Construction Traffic Report**) notes that Carlow Street and Cassins Lane (accessed via Carlow Street) will be utilised for site vehicular movements for most stages of the site's development (see Table 3.3 in the TTPP Construction Traffic Report).

As Carlow Street is already busy with local traffic and vehicle movements associated with the operation of North Sydney Boys High, we have the following concerns in respect of the increase in traffic volumes that will be generated by the development.

1. As noted in the TTPP Construction Traffic Report, Carlow Street is a designated local road generally configured as a two-way road with two traffic lanes and kerbside parking, across a 11.7 m wide road carriageway (kerb to kerb). Based on kerbside parking accounting for 6m of available road space (being 3m each side of the road based on car width 2m (allowing for 4WD vehicle types currently parked in Carlow Street) + free space between car and gutter 0.3m + free space between parked car and passing vehicles), there will only be 6m available for traffic. In Table 4.1 (Construction Vehicle Traffic Generation) of the TTPP Construction Traffic Report, during Stage 2B Demolition works, construction traffic movements in Carlow Street, are projected to be 50 per day (two-way), with 35 Heavy Rigid Vehicle (HRV) movements per day. As the dimensions of a HRV are 12.5m (l) x 2.5m (w) – excluding allowances for mirrors/ wheel guards), it must be expected that the movement of these vehicles during the day, 6 days per week, will significantly impact traffic flow in Carlow Street, and increase traffic congestion particularly at the junction of Carlow and West Streets where trucks will be required to turn right.
2. The intersection between Carlow Street and West Street is essentially a 3-way intersection of local designated roads (due to the location of Emmett Street diagonally opposite Carlow Street) and includes a pedestrian crossing. As West Street is already used by a steady stream of traffic as a thoroughfare to/from the Pacific Highway, the intended use of this intersection as the exit route for large trucks during the construction period, with all trucks required to take a right hand turn to reach nearby Falcon Street, is of particular concern in respect of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
3. The pedestrian crossing located at the intersection of Carlow and West Streets is used by a large number of school students (accessing nearby North Sydney Girls High School from bus stops on Falcon and Miller Streets), customers of the two very well patronised cafes located on the Emmett/West Street and Carlow/West Street corners, and residents (including a large number of children) from surrounding streets who use Carlow Street as the access road to St Leonards Park/North Sydney Oval. As this crossing is not regulated by lights, it is considered that a significant risk is posed to those using the crossing by the substantial increase in vehicle movements that will result from the development – both during and after the construction phases.
4. In the documentation provided for the proposal, there is no reference to the following important issues in respect of the potential traffic flow impact to Carlow Street:
 - (i) an assessment of vehicular movements at the intersection of Carlow and West Streets and the ease with which the Heavy and Medium Rigid Vehicles will negotiate the required right-hand turn into West Street
 - (ii) the impact to the Tucker Street/Carlow Street intersection which is already constrained by the movement of vehicles servicing the nearby North Sydney Boys

High School. It is noted that this intersection will be located very close to the construction site access point and therefore is likely to be impacted by the entry/exiting of the longer base HRVs.

- (iii) whether directional restrictions will be placed on the Carlow Street carpark egress (e.g., left in, left out) for the potential 90 cars using this car park each school day for the drop-off/pick-up of children enrolled in the Early Childhood Centre.
 - (iv) an assessment of the impact of the exiting vehicles on the functionality of the Carlow/Miller Street traffic signals and queuing of vehicles travelling in an easterly direction. It is noted that the site construction vehicle entry/exit point is close to this intersection and the queuing of cars at the lights may have an adverse impact on the movement of HRVs into/out of the construction site.
 - (v) in future years where the school student population capacity is forecast to grow to (approximately) 1,400 students from the current level of 800, an assessment of the impact of the exiting vehicles on the functionality of the Carlow/Miller Street traffic signals and queuing of vehicles travelling in an easterly direction. It is noted that currently, with a lower school population, during the morning and afternoon school drop-off/pick-up times, there can be significant queuing of cars in Carlow Street due to students alighting from buses and crossing Miller Street to enter the school, resulting in delays in vehicles getting through the lights. With a larger number of students crossing the road, there will be increased delays in vehicles being able to make left/right turns into/from Miller Street.
5. In the Conclusion section of the Transport and Accessibility Impact Statement prepared by TTPP (**TTPP Transport Report** - Page 78), in respect of the proposed increase of 600 students by 2026, it is stated: *"The proposal is estimated to generate an increase of 276 vehicle movements per hour in the morning and 147 vehicle movements per hour in the afternoon."* As Carlow Street, with only 2 available lanes of traffic flow, is designated to become the primary access/egress point for the school and its students, it must be expected that a considerable proportion of these vehicle movements will occur in this street.

As a resident, I witness every school day, the current high level of vehicle congestion and traffic gridlock that occurs in Carlow Street at school drop-off/pick-up times. The forecast concurrence by 2026 of significantly increased levels of pedestrian and vehicular movements in a local street that was never designed to handle such large traffic volumes, must result in an increase in the risk to pedestrians' safety. The potential for this risk to be further escalated by the strong likelihood that students from both North Sydney Boys High and Marist College will attempt, to cross Carlow Street other than at the designated pedestrian lights must also be considered in the assessment of appropriateness of the current traffic arrangements.

We are aware that similar concerns related to the impact of additional traffic on Carlow Street traffic flows, pedestrian access and parking have been raised by a

significant number of other local residents and we think that it would be inappropriate for these concerns not to be given due and fair consideration in the assessment of this proposal.

6. In asserting that the proposal will have a minimal adverse impact on local traffic congestion, there is significant reliance placed on the success of the Green Traffic Plan, however, detailed reports on the success and effectiveness of this Plan at other locations has not been provided. While the TTPP Transport Report highlights options to promote alternate public transport and bicycle usage, the results of a survey conducted of students detailed within the report (Page 74) noted that a sizable number of students were not interested in changing their current method of commuting to school. With the proposed 75% increase in the school student capacity numbers from (approximately) 800 to 1,400 over coming years, it will only require 10% of students not utilising public or other non-vehicular forms of transport, to impact significantly adversely what is already a chronic gridlock traffic situation in Carlow Street on all school days during the drop-off/pick-up times.
7. The proposed 1,500 capacity theatre will also increase traffic congestion and create parking issues at times outside of school hours, particularly on the weekend. Currently if there is an event at St Leonards Park or North Sydney Oval on a weekend, without any school activity, there are significant traffic congestion and parking problems; and if school events were to be added to this, then there will be a substantial increase on limited existing resources.

Parking

There are currently 110 car park spaces on the existing site for the use of school staff and without construction work and the associated site consultants and other visitors this will bring into the local area, parking in Carlow Street and other local streets is already difficult to obtain. The proposal indicates that 7 current street parking spaces will be lost to residential/public use during the construction phase of the development, but no timeline is provided as to when these will be returned. A firm commitment that these spaces will not be permanently lost to the school for its on-going use should be required with any proposal approval.

Air Quality

1. It is expected that with such an extensive development, and in particular, excavation works associated with the proposed basement car park, there will be significant amounts of dust created. While it is noted that Class A Hoardings will be used during the construction period, as the area adjacent to the site is largely residential, particular reference to the ability of this level of hoarding to contain site dust and other contaminants is requested to be undertaken in the assessment of the proposal. Other measures such as the wetting of dry ground to reduce air borne particles is also requested to be considered as part of any approval provided in the interests of the well-being of surrounding neighbours.

Noise

1. As the construction period is planned to take over 4 years to complete, the current proposal to allow works to be undertaken 6 days a week from 7am to 5pm each day fails to take into consideration the residential and recreational (St Leonards Park) nature of the precinct surrounding the development. While the proposal outlines several strategies designed to minimise the disruption to the school and its students, similar consideration of the neighbourhood in which the school is situated is not provided.

It is requested that the proposed Saturday construction hours be removed, or at a minimum be reduced to 7am to 12pm.

2. As it is acknowledged by many experts that one of the longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will be an increase in the number of people working from home accordingly, the impact of increased noise levels on residential areas should be taken into consideration in the assessment of any development proposal.

With the proposed progressive increase in school capacity by 600 students over the period of the site development, it is considered that the recreational roof space and balconies located on the Miller/Carlow Street building will significantly increase noise levels emitted from the school, when compared to the one playground currently fronting Carlow Street. While the landscape plans indicate the planting of some species of screening vegetation along the rooftop edge adjacent to Carlow Street, it is not believed that these will be sufficient to mitigate the increased volume of noise output from students and therefore it is considered important that some form of noise barriers are incorporated into the building design if these open roof space/balconies are to be retained in the final approved building design.

Native Trees

It is acknowledged that necessarily a number of indigenous and ornamental trees will need to be removed from the development site in order to accommodate the new building envelope. However, consistent with the importance that North Sydney Council publishes that it places on tree cover and indigenous plant species, as documented in strategies such

as the "North Sydney Urban forest Strategy", the Council's regulations on pruning and removing trees on private land, and Council website material on "Native Plants of North Sydney", we request that the development landscaping minimise the removal of indigenous trees within the site, particularly the mature indigenous trees on the perimeter of the site along the south eastern section of Carlow Street.

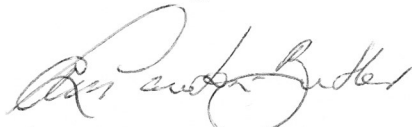
Conclusion

We thank you for your time taken in reading through this submission.

We are aware that there were a large number of other submissions made in respect of the first public exhibition of this Proposal and in addition to this submission, we would expect that there will also be other submissions received by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to this exhibition of the Amended Proposal.

Due to the contentious nature of this proposal, we request that in addition to the due consideration of the matters outlined above, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces direct that a public hearing be held in relation to this development.

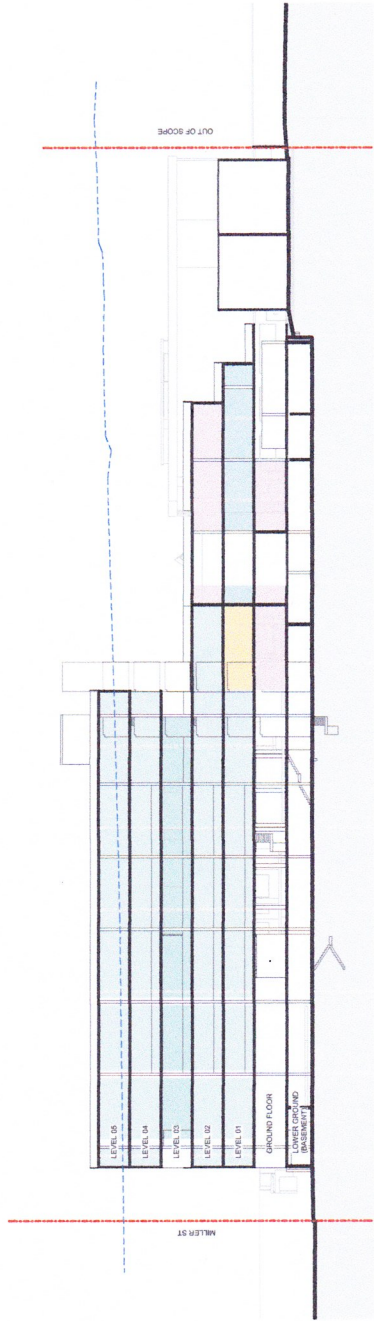
Yours faithfully,



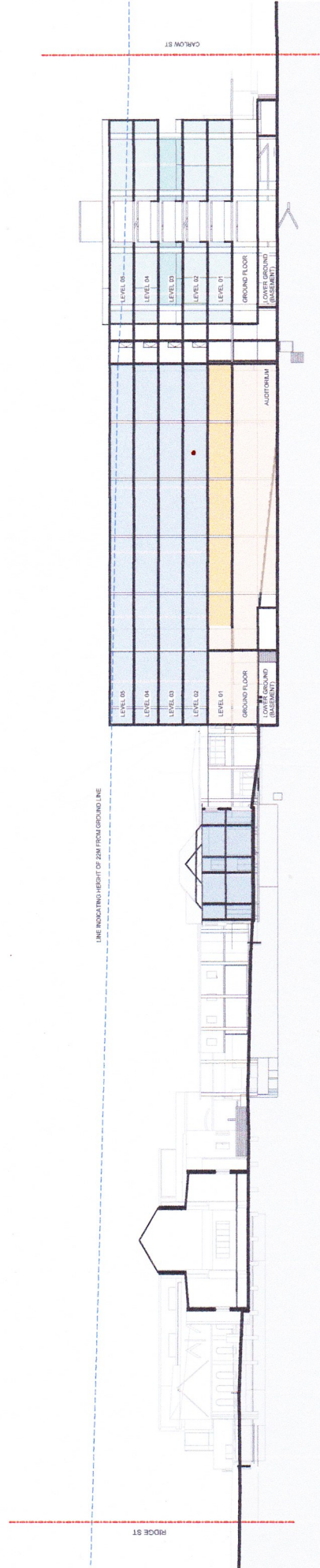
Ann-Maree Lawton-Butler



John Butler



2 CARLOW ST SECTION

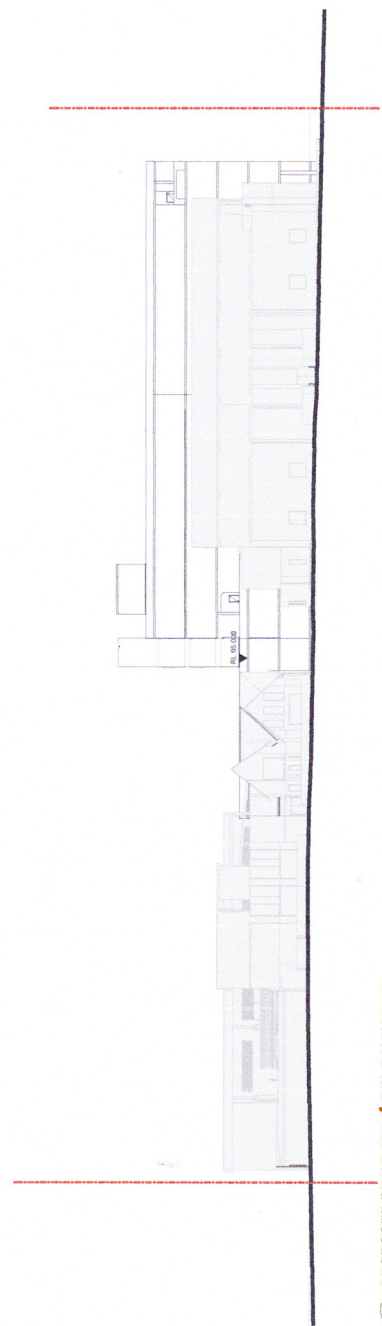


1 MILLER ST SECTION

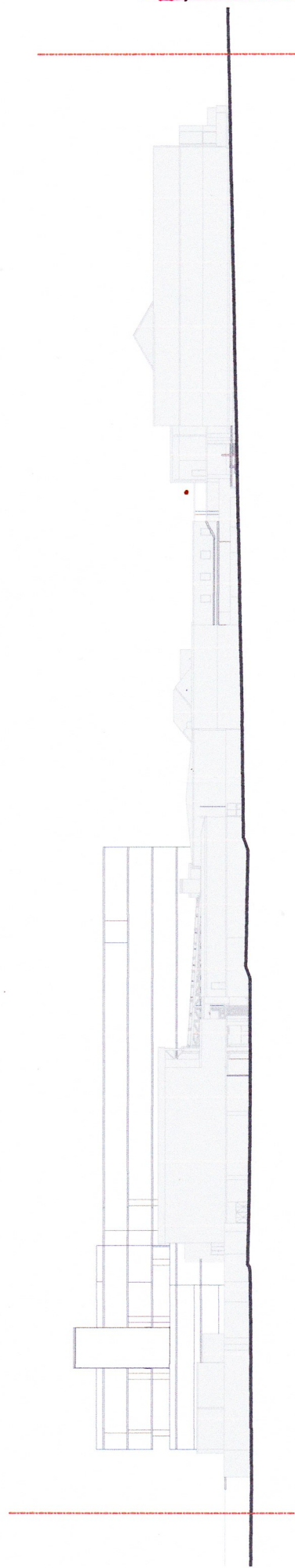


EDUCATIONAL LEARNING PRECINCT - BUILDING SECTIONS
1:600 SCALE

ANNEXURE A



1 PROPOSED RIDGE STREET ELEVATION



2 PROPOSED CASSINS AVE ELEVATION



EDUCATIONAL LEARNING PRECINCT - STREET ELEVATIONS
1:600 SCALE